

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 SAM-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5738

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 0439

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, PINS

SUBJECT: FALLOUT FROM NOV 25 REPORT

REF: LISBON 0412 (DTG 201544Z JAN 76)

SUMMARY: IN PRE-ARREST COMMENTS, FORMER COPCON CHIEF MAJ OTELO CARVALHO SAID HIS ARREST WAS PART OF LARGER PLAN TO ELIMINATE "SOCIALIST LINE" IN ARMED FORCES. HE DENIED COMPLICITY IN NOV 25 COUP ATTEMPT AND WARNED CURRENT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBERS AGAINST FUTURE "LIQUIDATION" BY RIGHT.

COUNCIL HAS DECREED EXPULSION FROM ARMED FORCES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IMPLICATED IN COUP WHO FAIL TO OBEY ORDERS TO TURN THEMSELVES IN. POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE REACTED PREDICTABLY

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TO FINDINGS OF COUP REPORT. END SUMMARY.

1. OTELO SPEAKS: HOURS BEFORE OBEYING ORDERS TO SURRENDER TO MILITARY AUTHORITIES JAN 20, FORMER COPCON CHIEF OTELO CARVALHO WAS INTERVIEWED BY COMMUNIST-LINING "DIARIO DE LISBOA." SYNTHESIS OF HIS COMMENTS FOLLOWS:

-- ARREST: HIS ARREST WAS PART OF LARGER PLAN BY RIGHT TO PROVE MILITARY COUP ATTEMPT TOOK PLACE NOV 25. RIGHT'S GOAL WAS ELIMINATION OF REMAINING "SOCIALIST LINE" IN ARMED FORCES. "ON HIS WORD OF HONOR," OTELO AFFIRMED HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT POSSIBLE TO ACCUSE HIM OF COMPLICITY IN COUP.

-- SELF-CRITICISM: BOTH HE PERSONALLY AND LEFT AS WHOLE HAD COMMITTED SERIOUS ERRORS IN PAST. MANY MISTAKES WERE DUE TO INEXPERIENCE OF AFM MEMBERS, WHICH FACILITATED THEIR MANIPULATION BY POLITICAL PARTIES.

-- THE FUTURE: PORTUGAL WAS CURRENTLY ENTERING "PARLIAMENTARY PHASE" WHICH WOULD RESULT IN "ATROPHY OF CLASS STRUGGLE," INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF "BOURGEOIS" DEMOCRACY, AND, ULTIMATELY, RETURN OF RIGHT WING AUTHORITARIANISM. HE CALLED ON REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO RESIST THIS PROCESS OR BE "LIQUIDATED" IN LONG RUN, ALONG WITH REMAINDER OF LEFT, INCLUDING SOCIALISTS.

2. MILITARY EXPELLED: REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL DECREE-LAW PUBLISHED IN JAN 21 OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT BULLETIN PROVIDED FOR EXPULSION OF MILITARY PERSONNEL IMPLICATED IN ABORTIVE COUP WHO HAVE FAILED, OR FAIL, TO PRESENT THEMSELVES TO MILITARY AUTHORITIES WHEN ORDERED TO DO SO. EXPULSION WOULD CARRY WITH IT LOSS OF POLITICAL RIGHTS FOR TWENTY YEARS, AS WELL AS LOSS OF PENSION AND PRIVILEGES. DECREE IS EXAMPLE OF NO-NONSENSE POLICY PURSUED BY ARMY CHIEF EANES AND "OPERATIONALS" IN SETTING MILITARY HOUSE IN ORDER.

3. REACTIONS TO NOV 25 REPORT: POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE REACTED PREDICTABLY TO RELEASE OF REPORT ON COUP ATTEMPT:

-- PCP: REJECTING IN STRONG TERMS REPORTS ALLEGATIONS OF ITS INVOLVEMENT, PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY
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(PCP) REITERATED THAT IT HAD ALWAYS FAVORED PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES AMONG RIVAL FACTIONS IN MILITARY. COMMUNISTS DENIED EXISTENCE OF "PCP - FUR (FAR LEFTIST UNITARY REVOLUTIONARY FRONT) - UDP (MARXIST-LENINIST POPULAR DEMOCRATIC UNION) LINE" REFERRED TO IN REPORT. PCP ANNOUNCED IT WOULD NOT BE DRAWN INTO "POLEMICS" WITH RIGHT OVER REPORT ALLEGATIONS.

-- CDS: SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CENTER PARTY (CDS) LAUDED FINDINGS.

CITING NEED TO DRAW NATURAL POLITICAL CONCLUSIONS FROM REPORT BUT OSTENSIBLY DENYING ANY WISH TO LAUNCH ANTI-PCP CAMPAIGN, CDS QUESTIONED WHETHER PCP, HAVING BEEN SHOWN TO BE IMPLICATED IN COUP ATTEMPT, SHOULD BE "REWARDED" BY CONTINUED REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNMENT."

-- PS AND PPD: SOCIALISTS ARE EXPECTED TO RELEASE STATEMENT JAN 21, WHILE POPULAR DEMOCRATS SEC GEN SA CARNEIRO WILL PROBABLY ADDRESS SUBJECT AT PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR JAN 22.

-- FAR LEFT: WITH ONE EXCEPTION, REACTION FROM FAR LEFT PARTIES WAS UNIFORMLY NEGATIVE. TROTSKYITE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALIST LEAGUE (LCI) SAW REPORT AS ANOTHER STEP IN REACTIONARY OFFENSIVE BEGUN LAST SUMMER. MOVEMENT FOR SOCIALIST LEFT (MES) CONCURRED, EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE THAT WORKERS WOULD PREVENT VICTORY OF RIGHT. REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF PROLETARIAT (PRP) ALSO ATTACKED COUP REPORT IN STRONG TERMS, CONTRASTING DETENTION OF OTELO CARVALHO WITH GOVERNMENT'S RECENT RELEASE OF HIGH FIGURES IN FORMER REGIME AND MEMBERS OF POLITICAL POLICE. MARXIST-LENINIST PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP-ML), SOLE FAR LEFT GROUP SUPPORTING AZEVEDO GOVERNMENT, STRUCK ONLY DISCORDANT NOTE. PCP-ML PRAISED DETENTION OF OTELO, BUT EXPRESSED VIEW THAT HE WAS BUT "LITTLE FISH" WHILE "BIG BOSSES" (READ CUNHAL ET AL) REMAINED AT LARGE. PCP-ML CRITICIZED REPORT ONLY FOR FAILING TO SUFFICIENTLY EMPHASIZE PCP RESPONSIBILITY.

4. COMMENT: COMMUNIST HOPE OF PUTTING QUESTION OF THEIR ROLE IN COUP ATTEMPT BEHIND THEM HAS BEEN DEALT FATAL BLOW. CDS IS FIRST TO WALK THROUGH DOOR OPENED BY RELEASE OF REPORT; OTHERS WILL FOLLOW. DEBATE ON FUTURE OF PCP IN GOVERNMENT, JUST NOW BEGINNING, CANNOT BE AVOIDED.

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